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AUTHOR Jelinek, James John
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ABSTRACT

The development of an individual's commitment to school and society begins with his present interests, no matter what they happen to be, and is based on six components of maturity. Currently, American culture is experiencing the arrest of mature development; we know what needs to be done to solve our most critical problems, but lack the commitment to do so. Rich countries do not confront worldwide poverty; most people refuse to acknowledge that we make resources last longer by using less. American education must seek to develop both the wisdom to solve social/cultural problems and a sense of community. The reward-punishment approach to teaching and socialization does not work because students are internally rather than externally motivated. Behavior Control Perception Psychology, however, provides an approach to teaching commitment and responsibility. The theory focuses on six interrelated components of maturity which must always be nurtured in the student: intelligence, responsibility, articulation, sexuality, empathy, and philosophical thinking. When these six elements interact with instruction that addresses the student's present interests, he pursues learning with a discipline, builds upon the structure so that he can use it, and develops pleasure in it. (Author/KC)

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COMMITMENT: ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO THE TEACHING OF RESPONSIBILITY
IN SCHOOL AND SOCIETY.

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DR. JAMES JOHN JELINEK, EMERITUS PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION, ARIZONA
STATE UNIVERSITY.

College of Education, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona, 85287.

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A high school student grabbed the first young woman he saw walking down a street in Saint Louis, forced her into his room, tied her hands and feet to his bedposts, stripped off all her clothes, and then burned his initials into her breasts with lighted cigarettes. Later he was apprehended by the police and brought to a court of law. The judge, deeply upset by the brutal act, digressed from his usual judicial decorum by asking the young man why he did it. With a smile on his face and in a firm voice, the young man said, "Because I enjoyed it." (56:passim)

Narcissistic Lifestyles.

This is called self-fulfillment, self-fulfillment in a world turned upside down. (64:passim) I call it pathological narcissism. Pathology represents an intensified version of normality. Christopher Lasch in his profound book entitled The Culture of Narcissism, states that pathological narcissism found in character disorders tells us much about narcissism as a social phenomenon. It is especially for this reason that we as educators need to study the etiology of narcissism and to pay attention to the growing body of clinical writing on the subject.

We as educators need to pursue those studies of personality disorders that occupy the border line between neurosis and psychosis and depict a type of personality that is immediately recognizable, in a more subdued form, to observers of the contemporary cultural scene — that personality type who is adept at managing the impressions he gives to others; who is ravenous for admiration but contemptuous of those he manipulates into providing it; who is unappeasingly hungry for emotional experiences with which to fill an inner void; who is unable to sacrifice immediate pleasure for future satisfaction and fulfillment; who avoids committing himself to specific long-term goals; who is forever searching for some device that will make choice unnecessary; who wants ends without means, ends without making choices; who wants what he wants immediately; who cannot tolerate delay; and who is irresponsible and utterly lacking in commitment.

We as educators must learn to explore any of the character traits of narcissism that appear in less extreme form in such profusion in the everyday life of our age, such traits, for example, as dependence on the vicarious warmth provided by others, combined with a fear of

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dependence, a sense of inner emptiness, boundless repressed rage, and unsatisfied oral cravings.

We as educators need to make the connections that exist between the narcissistic personality-type and certain characteristic patterns of contemporary culture, such as the intense fear of aging and death, an altered sense of time that envisages only the present moment of gratification, fascination with celebrity, fear of competition, decline of the play spirit, and deteriorating relations between men and women.

"Every age," says Lasch (39:41), develops its own peculiar forms of pathology, which express in exaggerated form its underlying character structure." In Freud's time, hysteria and obsessional neurosis carried to extremes the personality traits associated with the capitalist order at an earlier stage of its development -- acquisitiveness, fanatical devotion to work, and a fierce repression of sexuality. In our time, the preschizophrenic, border line, or personality disorders have attracted increasing attention, along with schizophrenia itself. "What hysteria and the obsessive neuroses were to Freud and his early colleagues . . . at the beginning of this century," writes Michael Beldoch (3:136,138), "the narcissistic disorders are to the workaday analyst in these last few decades. . . ."

Shirley Sugerman (57:15,11) in her fascinating book entitled Sin and Madness: Studies in Narcissism, states, "It is the myth of Narcissus that mirrors back to us our strange condition and emerges as an extraordinary metaphor for the human condition." The gulf between our acknowledged and unacknowledged intention has widened, revealing so dark and deep a chasm that we are shocked into taking notice. These disjunct intentions have split us in two. We find ourselves, seemingly unwittingly, going in opposite directions. We preach love and do violence. We speak peace and make war. We praise progress and sense doom. We are divided selves in a divided world. The demonic course that man is on seems to be leading not only to suicide but also to sociocide.

This is not to say, however, that the self-fulfillment revolution is without some redeeming quality. As a result of it we are probably less fearful, less status-ridden, more diverse, more free, and more tolerant than we were before. But in our preoccupation with self-fulfillment we have grown recklessly unrealistic about the role of commitment and responsibility in a democratic nation, even to the extent that many individuals in school and society define democracy in terms of our being able to do whatever you please -- "to do your own thing," "to hang loose," "to stay cool," and "to be laid back." Thus, we are

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becoming less sensitive to the plight of the most disadvantaged and most vulnerable citizens in our economy, even growing bored, for example, with the problems of race, politics, religion, and economics that our nation had begun to address in earlier decades. "For a society to be just," says Michael Apple (2:12, cf.22), "it must, as a matter of principle and action, contribute most to the advantage of the least advantaged." The self-fulfillment revolution countermands such principle and action. The fallacy of self-fulfillment psychology is the assumption that a person can be wholly autonomous, solitary, contained, and "self-created."

Educational Implications.

At birth the human infant is essentially a self-centered animal. Within his singular world he wants solely to do his own thing, to fulfill his every want. He is not born loving others or caring about them. He enters the world with the omnipotent illusion of total self-fulfillment. Thus loving and caring are learned behaviors. An individual becomes capable of loving and caring only to the extent that he learns to move away from the total self-absorption he carries into the world from the moment he is born.

For the child to shift from a primarily narcissistic human being to a social person aware of the existence and needs of others requires development based upon the best we know in education and upon the joint efforts of school and society. For one to learn he best enhances his me element by giving to the society in which he lives, rather than constantly taking from it or, to put it another way, for an individual to learn that to find one's self one must first lose one's self, is to learn a very difficult and profound truth.

According to Aaron Stern (54:13) in his book entitled Me: The Narcissistic American, to ascertain one's position in the spectrum of narcissistic behavior, it is useful to picture a theoretical scale extending from zero to one hundred, with zero identifying a total narcissistic posture and one hundred identifying a loving posture devoid of narcissistic traces. Probably none of us is characterized by total narcissistic behavior or a completely loving posture, but the scale is nevertheless useful in determining whether one's behavior is characterized by a predominance of love or of narcissism. In using the scale, one can examine the facets of one's behavior to approximate what percentage of behavior is

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exclusively self-fulfilling compared with behaviors that involve some self-deprivation in the cause of caring about others. Anyone whose life is governed by the forces of narcissism more than fifty per cent of the time can be theoretically regarded as primarily narcissistic. A person whose choices reflect the capacity to care for others more than fifty per cent of the time can be theoretically regarded as primarily a loving human being.

In these terms the child's progression from a narcissistic person to a loving person is an educational process. If arrestment or regression occurs, the person lives the life of an immature, narcissistic individual. As such he cares for other human beings only to the extent that they provide him with self-gratification. He enjoys the company of others only if it does not compromise his personal needs. He possesses a low tolerance for deprivation and structures his life so that he does not have to endure frustration. He competes only as long as he feels he is winning. He shelters himself from the threat of competitive defeat by participating only in carefully selected activities. He compensates for frustration by frequent withdrawal into fantasy, where there is no limit to his successes. He lives as exclusively as possible to satisfy his own real and imagined needs, and tends to them religiously.

Cultural Change.

By way of integrating findings from national studies with hundreds of in-depth life histories, Yankelovich (64:55), Skelly, and White, Inc., ascertained that throughout the nineteen sixties, while the news media focused on the ferment in American life -- civil rights marches, the assassinations of John and Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, protests against Vietnam, and other spectacular events -- the vast majority of Americans went about their daily routines unruffled, their outlook on life hardly touched by these momentous happenings, but that in recent years, while news media told us we had reverted to a period of normalcy -- quiet campuses with well-dressed young people retreating from liberal social attitudes toward more conservative values -- there was a preponderance of evidence showing startling cultural changes in American life -- into the private spaces of inner lives, the semi-public space of lives within the family, in the neighborhood, and into the public space of lives of citizens. The startling cultural change was the self-fulfillment revolution. Tom Wolfe labeled this period the "me decade," Daniel Bell criticized the infatuation with the "unrestrained self,"

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cultural historian Christopher Lasch angrily condemned the "culture of narcissism," and Daniel Yankelovich skilfully and painstakingly analyzed the "new rules for searching for self-fulfillment in a world turned upside down." (64:33)

The rage for self-fulfillment, according to the research of Yankelovich, Skelly, and White, Inc., (64:3-15) has now spread to virtually the entire population of America. It manifests itself in many ways -- in the consumer, environmental, and quality-of-life movements; in the emphasis on self-help, localism, and participation; in the hospice movement; in the flood of books on cultivating the self; in the questioning of the scientific-technological world view; in greater acceptance of sexuality -- nudity, sex outside of marriage, homosexuality, and open eroticism of varied sorts; in a new preoccupation with the body and physical fitness; in a revival of interest in nature and the natural; and above all in a search for the "full, rich life," ripe with leisure and enjoyment, hedonism, as a substitute for the orderly, work-centered ways of earlier decades.

Basic Assumptions.

In 1978 a carefully selected team of writers and I wrote an ASCD Yearbook entitled Improving the Human Condition: A Curricular Response to Critical Realities (30:passim). The sale of the book has exceeded our wildest expectations, and it has received national awards, glowing reviews, and international acclaim. Despite its success, however, I think the book has an important flaw. The flaw is the assumption that school and society, once provided with important insights in such basic areas as communication, environment, science, technology, international affairs, justice, values, and education, will at the very least have a tendency to behave with wisdom. But the conclusions we come to, the emotions we harbor, and the passions that sway us are of much less significance than the basic assumptions upon which they are all founded.

We ourselves were in the midst of the self-fulfillment revolution. We were swept up in it. As a consequence we did not critically analyze the teachings of our super heroes who themselves were the leaders of the self-fulfillment revolution -- A. A. Maslow, Carl Rogers, Erich Fromm, Charlotte Buhler, and others, all of whom influenced an entire literature of pop psychology, including such books as Looking Out for

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Number One, Self Creation, Pulling Your Own Strings, and How to be Your Own Best Friend. Perhaps some of these leaders and their disciples are not pleased with the way their ideas have been accepted, disseminated, and implemented, but ideas mean their consequences, and as Alfred North Whitehead points out, "Great ideas often enter reality in strange guises and with disgusting alliances."

Social Problems.

For school and society to know what to do to solve social and cultural problems is one thing, but to have the commitment and responsibility to do that which is known to solve those problems is quite another. In the history of mankind no nation, no matter how knowledgeable about the solution of its social and cultural problems, has ever survived a culture of narcissism. For example, the Roman Empire (43:passim), just like its American counterpart, could boast of a highly developed system of law and justice, government and order, production of goods and services. But Rome crumbled. The symptoms of its fall centered around a culture of narcissism characterized by drug usage, homosexuality, bisexuality, and by a strident demand for hedonism accompanied by a lack of responsibility for government, family, and other social institutions.

According to John Kenneth Galbraith (19:308-342) we know what needs to be done to solve our most basic and critical problems, but for reasons of a lack of commitment and an unwillingness to accept responsibility we do not even want to say so:

The problem of rich countries and poor cannot be solved except by some redistribution of wealth, present or at minimum potential, between the two groups. That is not difficult to see. But not many want to commit themselves to that solution.

They are even less inclined to urge what we have seen is the oldest of remedies, which is for people to move from the poor countries to the rich.

Calamitous population increases cannot be checked except by control of births. Except for the Chinese and the Indians few anywhere are willing to commit themselves to this hard truth.

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Rich countries do not confront the problem of poverty. Income, whether in the form of food, housing, education, health care or money, is an excellent antidote for deprivation. "No truth," says Galbraith, "has spawned so much ingenious evasion."

Unemployment and inflation are constant threats to the well-being of people. Modern corporations and modern unions all facilitate and encourage more consumption to sustain it — the one sure way to drive up prices and keep them up. Few, if any, face up to the responsibility of admitting there is no way of combining high employment with stable prices that does not involve some control of income and prices.

The poorer the country, the poorer it is in administrative resources. The less, accordingly, can there be reliance on highly organized effort, of which socialism is the extreme example. The greater the poverty, the more, in general, must the poor countries rely on that release of individual energies that both Adam Smith and Karl Marx believed essential in early economic development. Not many want to confront this seemingly simple truth.

We protect environment only as we say what can or cannot be done to the ambient air, water, and landscape. Better an exception for the energy shortage, to protect jobs, for one's own automobile.

We make resources last longer by using less. Apparently this too is a difficult truth to which to be committed.

Not only are we behaving with a lack of commitment to solving our recently created problems but also to solving those problems our predecessors made considerable commitment to solve. According to Pat Choate and Susan Walter (9:passim) in their research study entitled America in Ruins, America's public facilities are wearing out faster than they are being replaced. In hundreds of communities, deteriorated public facilities threaten the continuation of basic community services such as fire protection, public transportation, water supplies, secure prisons, and flood protection. For example, the nation's 43,000 mile Interstate Highway System, only now approaching completion, is deteriorating at a rate requiring reconstruction of 2,000 miles of road per year. But now, in both public and private sectors, we have been committed to consumption over investment. Economic renewal must be the premier commitment inherent in domestic policy in this decade. Our public infrastructure is strategically bound up in that renewal. We must make the commitment to face the complex task at hand of rebuilding our public facilities as an essential prerequisite to economic renewal

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and maintenance of our quality of life, but the fact of the matter is we are unwilling to make that commitment, emphasizing so-called supply-side economics to the exclusion of demand-side economics.

Curricular Concerns.

An important point, then, is that American education must seek not only to develop the wisdom to solve the social/cultural problems inherent in the democracy in which it exists, but also to develop a needed sense of community -- the feeling that, at some point, the special interest, even if it is yours, must give way to the general interest; that what best serves all best serves you. With this must go a shrewd awareness that those who resist the general interest must themselves be resisted. When corporations, generals, bureaucrats, lawyers, physicians, and others put their own pecuniary, hedonistic, narcissistic interest ahead of the public interest, people must sense, react, and oppose.

Also, American education must help learners to develop the sense of personal security that is so instrumental in helping them to make clear and unambiguous commitment to the task at hand and to distinguish between those who do and those who do not. In modern spectator politics it is important for citizens to identify double-talk, to identify the politician who affirms his commitment to the anxieties of the day and then deftly persuades those who dislike the requisite action that they have nothing to fear from his election. A politician, for example, engages in double-talk when he foresees conflict with a particular country, foments in his constituency a hatred of that country, formulates catch words to bring that hatred to a lethal point, all the while stressing his love for peace! Other examples of double-talk include such statements as these: "To insure peace, we need a military force second to none." "Poverty must be eliminated, but without placing new demands on the taxpayer." "I stand for a better distribution of income, but for no interference with the rewards of individual enterprise."

The problem is that neither in the past or present have American school and society been effective in the development of commitment -- the development of a sense of responsibility to one's self and his fellows. Change is the one constant we expect in our history, and yet, despite all the changes, certain behaviors in American school and society, persist generation after generation.

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For example, while her class watched, a teacher in Los Angeles was forced at gunpoint to undress and then was sexually assaulted. When her assailant, a student, left fifteen minutes later, he took her clothes as well as her purse. Her students covered her with their sweaters and jackets. (56:passim)

A high school teacher, sitting at her desk grading papers, suffered an emotional breakdown after two of her students tossed lighted matches into her hair, setting it afire. (56:passim)

Plato once said the school is a mirror of the society in which it exists. This seems to be as true in our time as it was in Plato's. Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation show 1.3 million cases of violent crime occurred in the United States last year. (59:10) Every twenty-four minutes a murder is committed somewhere in the United States. Every ten seconds a house is burglarized. Every seven minutes a woman is raped. (10:16) The curse of violent crime is rampant not only in the ghettos of depressed cities, where it has always been a malignant force, but everywhere — in urban areas, in suburbs, and in peaceful countryside. (47:16)

Our way of attempting to solve problems such as these has been to invoke a "common sense" approach — to do things to individuals to get them to behave — to punish them when they are "bad" and to reward them when they are "good." (Cf.11:2;7:183-225) This psychology is known as Stimulus-Response Psychology by professional educators and psychologists. The difficulty with the "common sense" approach, Stimulus Response Psychology, is that we have reached a point of arrestment with respect to it. (7:183-225) We continue to use it over and over again even though it does not work.

Violence, according to Aaron Stern (54:147), is the wake of narcissism. Hell hath no fury like a narcissist scorned. Yet for a narcissist, being scorned is inevitable. The greater the narcissism, the greater the demands for gratification. The greater the demands for gratification, the greater the chance for frustration. The greater the frustration, the greater the aggression. Violence is a special form of behavior in which aggressive feelings are directly expressed toward other human beings who are either real or symbolic representations of the source of a person's frustration. One resorts to violence when other means of dealing with frustration fail.

Stimulus-Response Psychology is indeed widely held. It has been so ever since René Descartes (12:passim) first presented it three hundred years

ago. It became even more so when John Broadus Watson (61:158-177) early in the 1900's, following an example from the field of physics, stated that we could, by studying the effects of controlled objective stimuli on the objectively observed actions of animals and people, derive laws of behavior which could then be used to predict the behavior that would follow any stimulus. On this basis, most teachers, mothers, fathers, wives, husbands, children, bosses, coaches, ministers, and people in general, believe we should be as specific as possible in designing stimuli to bring about specific behavioral changes in others. Because this stimulus-response way of thinking is so widely held and because so much harm is done to individuals by those who try to force them to behave "their" way, it is worthwhile to explain why this common belief is not correct. (22:passim)

The main reason stimulus-response psychology is unsound in the teaching of commitment, the acceptance of responsibility, or the teaching of anything else, for that matter, is that we are internally, not externally motivated. Despite what most people believe, we cannot coerce individuals either with punishment or reward to get them willingly to do whatever goes against what they believe they need. For example, we now have more than one million children and youth in America who do not read, despite much good instruction, because reading right now does not fulfill what they consider to be their needs. Just because we think reading is good for everyone, does not change the fact that right now these children and youth do not read, mostly because they do not want to do so. As long as they do not want to do so, no one, no matter how expert or well-intentioned, will teach them. This point of view is inherent in Behavior Control Perception Psychology founded by Dr. William T. Powers (48:passim) and expertly elaborated by Dr. William Glasser.

"Behavior," says Powers "is the process by which organisms control their input sensory data. For human beings, behavior is the control of perception." (48:xi) The brain controls for input or for what it senses. When there is a difference between what man wants to sense and what he does sense, that difference generates a signal that activates his behavior. Man has a wide variety of outputs or behaviors. When he doesn't get the input for which he is controlling he tries one behavior after another. An input control system uses all the outputs it has available, and the more it has, the better it is at controlling for what it wants.

Behavior Control Perception Psychology, then, provides us with a foundation upon which to build an approach to the teaching of commitment and to the

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developing of responsibility in school and society. Such an approach must be characterized by integrationism and interactionism.

Integrationism. Until now the main approach of educational research has been to divide to conquer. By way of this approach research workers in education have amassed an enormous stockpile of classified information -- facts regarding everything from the behavior of pigeons in a structured environment to the behavior of the human mind confronted with a problem. Now, however, during these troubled times, educational research needs to take on a new approach, that of uniting to conquer. The fragmented human being, fragmented for purposes of minute and detailed research, must once more be made whole. A process of integrationism must take place as the theme of developing commitment in school and society comes to the center of attention.

More specifically, the development of responsibility in individuals in school and society must, first, be viewed as one part of the interrelated parts of the total complex that constitutes the mature person. The first task of the educator, then, is to formulate at least six aspects/categories/criteria of maturity -- Intelligence, Articulation, Responsibility, Empathy, Sexuality, and Philosophy. (29:passim)

First, the human being is born ignorant. At birth he is ignorant not only of specific cultural skills, but even of his own survival needs. The fact of the matter is that he will not survive even his infancy unless he learns to become intelligent -- to behave in terms of an anticipation of consequences.

The person who takes it for granted that his present store of knowledge is sufficient for the rest of his life is not mature. His responses to new situations are inadequate for his survival and his mind develops rigidities of dogma and pride that make it into an unchanging anomaly in a changing world.

Relationships between behaviors and their consequences are the kinds of relationships the person must progressively build with his world if he is to develop mental, emotional, and social maturity. When he fails to build and go on building these relationships, it is as Thorndike made clear, an arrestment to be attributed partly to reasons within himself and partly to reasons outside himself.

The first criterion, then for maturity is, "Is the person becoming increasingly more intelligent -- is he becoming increasingly more adept at behaving in terms of consequences?"

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Second, the human being is born irresponsible. However, not many years pass before the helpless, self-absorbed infant can grow into a child progressively capable of self-help and of help to others.

He learns that his well-being is best enhanced not as much by taking from others as from giving to others. He learns that other individuals have a right to expect him to do his share of the common enterprise and that he in turn has a right to expect others to do their share in that enterprise.

For him to mature is for him progressively to accept the fact that the human experience is a shared experience and the human predicament is a shared predicament.

In short, the child progressively learns responsibility.

The second criterion, then, for maturity is, "Is the person becoming increasingly more responsible?"

Third, the human being is born inarticulate. As he matures he builds word-referent relationships between himself and his world.

In no area of maturing is arrestment more common than in the area of communication. Arrestment in this area is so common that it is not even noticed; it is taken for granted as natural.

Some individuals, however, are so able to portray the referents of their world -- with confidence, precision, beauty, and sensitivity -- that their communicatory experiences hold for them more of success than failure.

Communication is that through which we most constantly influence one another. Communication is a maker of psychological universes. Through it we clarify our ideas and beliefs and transmit knowledge and experience.

The third criterion, then, for maturity is, "Is the person becoming increasingly more articulate?"

Fourth, the human being is born with diffuse sexuality. As he matures he grows toward a specific and creative sexual relationship.

Sexual immaturity of one sort or another is still, like immaturity in communication, so prevalent as to seem normal. Sex nature goes through

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stages of development before it reaches maturity. Because of some emotional experience, it might be arrested at any one of these stages.

Sexual behaviors do not rise far above or fall far below the level of nonsexual behaviors. Sex is one way through which character is expressed. A person whose sexual behavior is marked by a will to dominate and exploit others is not a person who has a mature approach to equality in other areas. While it is true that a traumatic sex experience can so arrest development that a person's whole relationship with his world is distorted, it is likewise true that a traumatic experience in some other area of life has a similar effect that expresses itself through the channel of sexual behavior.

The makers and users of Maybelline, Calvin Klein Jeans, Maidenform Bras, Oil of Olay, Tampons, Esoterica, and Aqua Velva, Old Spice, Marlboro Cigarettes, Grecian Formula, and so on, and so on, and so on, will not like my saying this, but no matter what the media want us to believe, femininity or masculinity is not acquired through the artifacts of a narcissistic culture. One finds masculinity and femininity only to the extent that he or she can give one's self to another within the structure of a heterosexual relationship. But, as Aaron Stern (54:95-106) points out, "each of us can give himself only to the extent that he has himself to give." Stern then goes on to say there is an increase in the number of homosexuals in our society and that this increase reflects the increase in narcissism. Narcissists are more prone to love others like themselves. For some, the homosexual preference is determined genetically, but for most, theirs is a choice born of fear. They withdraw from the frightening demands of a relationship with someone of the opposite sex and move to relationships with others who mirror themselves. The very act of choosing another who physically duplicates one's self increases the narcissistic quality of the relationship.

The fourth criterion, then, for maturity is, "Is the person increasingly developing a specific, creative sexuality?"

Fifth, the human being is born self-centered. One of the most important phases of maturing is that of developing from a self-centering to an understanding relationship with others, from egocentricity to sociocentricity.

A person is mature when he has both an ability and a willingness to do unto others as he would have them do to him. Without the tempering of self-centeredness there is not mutual support, common purpose, or structured reliance of person upon person. To do unto others as you would have them do unto you is to feel their feelings as you do your own. This is empathy.

The fifth criterion, then, for maturity is, "Is the person becoming increasingly more empathetic?"

Sixth, the individual is born in a world of isolated particulars. The newborn child has as yet no experience of wholeness, that is, of parts significantly related to one another. In his narcissism he senses this satisfaction, this pain, this fear, or this anger, but he does not know or understand the independent variables for these dependent variables.

The development of maturity begins when things begin to hang together, when the child begins to learn what follows from what. Out of heterogeneous data, the child begins to build coherent expectations. In brief, he begins to develop a philosophy of life. As he grows, the areas in which things hang together become larger and more complex. Life is a process of entering into, as well as creating, wholes of meaning. The whole lifts the isolated particular into its full significance. As the power to lift the part into the whole is developed, the relationship to life is philosophical.

The sixth criterion, then, for maturity is, "Is the person increasingly developing wholes of meaning -- is he becoming increasingly more philosophical?"

Interactionism. Let us turn now to another phase of the development of responsibility in school and society -- Interactionism, the interaction between ends and means.

The development of a new interest begins with the present interests of the individual, no matter what the new interest or the present interests happen to be. In technical terms, the "new interest," that which is supposedly being taught, would be called the input and the "present interest" would be called the reference perception. In a comparing station in his brain, the person is constantly comparing what is coming in (the input) with one or more of his built-in needs (reference perception). When what is coming in does not compare very well, we have what is called a perceptual error, a perceptual error being the difference between the reference perception and the input. A perceptual error always generates a signal called an error signal that activates the behavioral system to eliminate the error. The behavior is made up of all that the person thinks, does, feels. (22:passim) Thus Interactionism is founded upon the input-control system of Behavior Control Perception Theory (or BCP Theory) as opposed to the output-control system of Stimulus-Response Theory (or S-R Theory).

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Stated in its most affirmative form, then, the principle of Interactionism is this: If an individual perceives the content of instruction as being instrumental in fulfilling one or more of his present interests, (a) he pursues that content with a discipline, even if at first it is unpleasant to him, (b) he considers it to be a means to an end, (c) he learns it, (d) he builds it into structure so that he can use it at will, and (e) he develops pleasure in it.

Implementation.

To implement the Principle of Interactionism, then, the curriculum, if it is to enhance the development of responsibility in school and society, must respond to at least six questions at every point of instruction. Each of the questions takes the following form: In what sense does each component of maturity -- intelligence, articulation, responsibility, empathy, sexuality, philosophy -- serve as a means to influence the present interest (the reference perception) of the learner?

The following are examples: How does the student's ability to implement the component of intelligence influence a present interest (the reference perception) of the learner? How does the student's ability to use the component of articulation influence a present interest (reference perception) of the learner? and so on.

It is easy to observe that some questions inherent in this approach are much less familiar and therefore much more difficult than others. We simply know less about some matters than others. For example, we are more familiar with the questions involving intelligence and articulation than we are with questions involving sexuality and philosophy, and the like.

Yet teachers who are vital, enthusiastic, memorable, as Dr. Arthur W. Foshay (17:97-113) points out, are the ones who make use of all aspects of the human condition in most of what they teach. It is possible to have a curriculum for the development of maturity in students, if we will but conceive it so. To do so is not to engage in some of the more overt and fadistic changes we have undertaken from time to time, but rather to renew curriculum in terms of its deepest and most important meanings. It is to be hoped we will attempt to develop increasingly greater maturity in ourselves as indeed we attempt to develop it in our students.

For example, in Los Angeles, California, a husky male high school teacher caught a student trying to rape a female teacher and turned him over to the police. Three of the would-be rapist's friends then kicked the male teacher unconscious, knocking out several of his teeth, giving him a severe concussion and perforating an eardrum.

As Dr. Glasser (22:146) points out, "Punishment is still the most widely used and advocated way to control others. . . . But most punishment produces only short-term control. There is no good evidence that punishment will control people to do what you want them to do over a long period of time, because when you hurt people, you always increase their perceptual error. Since pain is generally not considered desirable, in most cases you provoke an immediate conflict between what the person would like to do and the fact that if he does it he will be hurt. As in all serious conflicts, frantic redirection and occasional reorganization occur, but there is no reason to believe that it will be the kind of redirection or reorganization the punisher wants."

In our example, for instance, the female teacher berates the student in front of his class for the poor work he is doing. He responds violently by molesting her. He and his friends are then punished by a judge who sends them to jail and warns them they will be punished even more severely for their next offense. To resolve the conflict the students move to another order of perception and vandalize the school. At this point the students believe they are solving the problem by getting rid of the school.

"Much vandalism, violence, and senseless, irresponsible destruction," says Glasser (22:147), "is redirection against the establishment. Basically," he says, "what we are saying is that when you attempt arbitrarily to control yourself or others you are on chancy ground. It might work if it is what you or they want, but it is rare that we or others want what we try to force ourselves or them to do." With ourselves or with others diagnosis of the situation and implementation of the Principle of Interactionism and Maturity is the more reasonable course of action. Let us in terms of the principle attempt to reconstruct our example of the confrontations of the teachers and students.

The female teacher had a comparing station open in which she had a worthwhile reference level to the effect that she wanted all her students to learn. The male teacher likewise had a comparing station open in which he had a worthwhile reference level to the effect that law and order be maintained in the school. Each of the students on the other hand had a comparing station open for status among peers, but not for academic competence or law and order in the school. The high-error perceptions of the teachers generated error signals in both of

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them that caused them to use punishment as a control. The high-error perceptions of the students generated error signals that also caused them to use punishment as a control.

Let us suppose the female teacher by way of diagnosing the situation and implementing the Principle of Interactionism and Maturity, quite understandably suspects the student is not controlling for academic competence, but rather for status among his peers. Instead of berating the student in the presence of his peers, she decided to chat with him outside of class in a quiet, confidential, friendly, interested, respectful manner. As both teacher and student control for care and concern — individual worth — they listen to each other because what is said comes to an active comparing station of each person. In this situation both share their thoughts without losing face. The development of new interests begins with the present interests of the individual, no matter what those new interests or present interests are. Both teacher and student begin to control for each other's thoughts, with both opening comparing stations to process various suggestions that ensue, with both beginning to develop new reference levels for the learning involved. With this kind of diagnosis along with the implementation of the Principle of Interactionism and Maturity the whole tragic situation that began with the Stimulus-Response Approach could have been avoided.

Conclusion.

In conclusion, then, the development of an ethic of commitment and responsibility in school and society is inherent in the integrated components of a theory of maturity and begins with the present interests of the learner, no matter what those present interests happen to be.

As Albert Einstein pointed out, the individual through education gradually becomes more conscious than ever of his dependence on society. He does not experience this dependence as a positive asset, but rather as a threat to his natural rights. All human beings, whatever their position in society, are suffering from this process of deterioration. Unknowingly prisoners of their own narcissism, they feel insecure, lonely, and deprived of the naive, simple, and unsophisticated meaning of life. Man can find meaning in life, short and perilous as it is, only through devoting himself to society.

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